



Springfield-Greene County  
Health Department  
*Helping people live longer, healthier, happier lives*

**\*\*\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 8-1-05\*\*\***

***From the Office of the Director of Health***

### **World Breastfeeding Week Encourages Breastfeeding Beyond Six Months**

During World Breastfeeding Week August 1-7, the Springfield-Greene County Health Department joins health agencies around the world in encouraging mothers to breastfeed exclusively for the first six months and then to supplement breast milk with food and drinks for as long as mother and baby want to continue breastfeeding.

After six months, babies need more than just breast milk to meet their nutritional needs. According to the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action, breastfed babies 6-8 months old get about 70% of their energy needs from breast milk. That drops to 55% at 9-11 months and to 40% at 12-23 months. After six months of exclusive breastfeeding, mothers need to feed their babies the right foods and drinks to add to the overall nutrition the baby receives.

Between 6-24 months of age, babies grow very quickly. Their energy, vitamin and mineral requirements increase, but their stomachs are still very small. During this time they need nutrient-dense foods. Breastfed babies over 6 months of age should receive the following daily food supplements:

- Meat, poultry, fish, egg
- Beans, peas, lentils, tofu, nut pastes
- Milk products such as yogurt or cheese
- Colored vegetables
- Colored fruits
- Rice, maize, potato, wheat

Breast milk has often been referred to as the “perfect food,” and experts agree that even after six months breast milk still contains protein, fat and other nutrients babies and toddlers need. In fact, some immune factors in breast milk are present in even greater amounts in the second year of breastfeeding. The effects of breastfeeding can carry on through childhood and into adulthood. Breastfed babies have fewer infections, allergies, colic and diarrhea. Breastfeeding helps offset obesity and enhances intelligence.

**For more information, contact:**

Julie Randolph, BS, IBCLC (417) 864-1324

###